on prices to periodically review and calculate the prices of common commodities of daily use on a region-wise basis to protect the interests of the consumers;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative, whether Government propose to set up such an agency in the near future; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) A Cabinet Committee on Prices (CCP) under the Chairmanship of the Union Finance Minister and Special Action Committee of Secretaries on Monitoring of Prices (SACP) are monitoring the supplies and prices of essential commodities on regular basis. These committees take necessary measures to keep the prices of essential commodities under watch and also to augment their supplies. The Ministry of Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution also monitor the prices of 10 essential commodities, namely, rice, wheat, sugar, gram dal, tur dal, mustard oil, groundnut oil, vanaspati, tea and salt on daily and weekly basis.

The Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices make recommendations on prices in respect of industrial products and consumer durables and the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices recommends the prices of agricultural commodities on regular basis. In view of this, there is no need for setting up of another national agency on prices.

Laid off Workers in Sick and Closed Units

*195. SHRI G.G. SWELL:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of idle or laid-off workers in all the sick and closed units in the country; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to prevent sickness or winding up of sick units so that the labour is saved from the hardship of unemployment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) As per the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 "Lay off" means failure, refusal or inability of an employer on account of shortage of coal or power of raw-materials or the accumulation of stocks or the breakdown of machinery or natural calamity or for any other connected easons to give employment to a workmen whose name is borne on the muster-rolls of his industrial establishment and who has not been retrenched. "Closure" means the permanent closing down of a place of employment or part thereof.

Statements I and II giving the number of units which effected lay off and the number of workers laid off as well as the number of units closed and number of workers affected due to closure during the years 1990 to 1993 are annexed (see below). The number of workers laid off in the sick units is not compiled separately.

Statements I and II giving the number potentially sick industrial units are drawn up by the banks and financial institution concerned on case to case basis in terms of guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India. Banks and financial institutions periodically review implementation of the rehabilitation packages by the managements of sick industrial units and initiate corrective action where necessary.

The Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), a quasi-judicial body set-up under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985, has been adequately empowered to take necessary preventive, ameliorative, remedial and other measures for revival of sick units.

Statement I

Number of units closed and workers affected during 1990-93 (*Provisional*)

Cause	1990		1991		1992		1993 (Jan.-April)	
	Number of closed units	Workers affected	Number of closed units	Workers affected	Number of closed units	Workers affected	Number of closed Units	Workers affected
1. Financial Stringency	53	1409	84	6408	83	2878	13	41
2. Shortage of Power	1	90	1	80	..	..	2	16
3. Lack of Demand for Products	36	1002	29	581	34	798	9	178
4. Shortage of raw materials	6	267	77	11037	9	450	2	25
5. Break down of machinery	..	..	2	10	..	..	..	..
6. Others / Not known	58	2199	45	3323	57	8142	19	886
TOTAL	154	4967	238	21439	183	12268	45	1523

Statement II

Number of units which effected lay-off and workers laid off during 1990-93 (*Provisional*)

Cause	1990		1991		1992		1993 (Jan.-April)	
	Number of Lay-off	Workers laid-off	Number of Lay-off	Workers laid-off	Number of Lay-off	Workers laid-off	Number of Lay-off	Workers laid-off
1. Shortage of Power	178	35933	131	28661	176	67808	49	19539
2. Shortage of raw material	107	8246	127	18853	91	12990	37	5439
3. Break down of machinery	27	1576	29	3575	47	6699	11	234
4. Lack of demand for Products	63	1817	82	3157	76	2925	29	1217
5. Financial Stringency	24	2771	36	2235	25	7506	13	3163
6. Off season	1	19	..	..	..	..	..	..
7. Others/Not known	42	13718	56	14576	63	10890	18	1246
TOTAL	442	64080	461	71060	478	108818	157	30838

Source : Labour Bureau, Shimla.